Update on Riser Insertion Tube Tool Progress

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ROBERT, La. - The Unified Area Command for the response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill continues to advance multiple subsea options to contain and ultimately stop the flow of oil from the MC 252 well in the Gulf of Mexico.

Overnight the Riser Insertion Tube Tool was successfully tested and inserted into the leaking riser, capturing some amounts of oil and gas. The oil was stored on board the Discoverer Enterprise drill ship 5,000 feet above on the water's surface, and natural gas was burned through a flare system on board the ship.

The test was halted temporarily when the tube was dislodged. While this is disappointing, it is not unexpected given the challenging operating environment.

Technicians have fully inspected the system and have re-inserted the tool.

The tool is fashioned from a 4-inch pipe and is inserted into the leaking riser, from which the majority of the flow is coming. While not collecting all of the leaking oil, this tool is an important step in reducing the amount of oil being released into Gulf waters.

The procedure - never attempted before at such depths - involves inserting a 5-foot length of the specifically-designed tool into the end of the existing, damaged riser from where the oil and gas is leaking. In a procedure approved by federal agencies and the Federal On Scene Coordinator, methanol will also be flowed into the riser to help prevent the formation of gas crystals, known as hydrates. Gas and oil will then flow to the surface to the Discoverer Enterprise drillship.

The Enterprise has the capability to separate the oil, gas and water mixture safely and eventually store or offload the recovered oil onto another vessel.

We will continue to provide updates as they become available.

For information about the response effort, visit www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com.